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ABSTRACT

Suggestions are made for the use of local education agencies in the establishment of successful continuing education centers for teachers. The following topics are discussed: (1) the federal and state programs: a comparison; (2) alternative ways of viewing centers; (3) relationships with colleges and universities: some options; (4) regional networking, interfacing, and contracting; (5) needs assessment: from school site to region; (6) governance: collaboration and parity; (7) differentiating among delivery strategies; (8) training trainers; (9) evaluation; and (10) sources of information and assistance. (JD)

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DRAFT

Advisory

MAKING CENTERS WORK

Staff Development Technical Assistance Series No. Five

Suggestions to Local Schools, Districts, and County Offices of Education

Office of Staff Development
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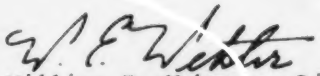
INTRODUCTION

Staff Development Centers for school staffs are going to be with us for awhile. Regardless of the model or the source of funds, both government and the united teaching professions agree that continuing education for the practitioners of instruction should be closer to the school site as opposed to university campus-based.

There are a variety of models for centers. California will have Professional Development and Program Improvement Centers, School Resource Centers, and Teacher Centers. Th one common thread running through the several enabling laws is that staff development resources should be directly related to the assessed needs of the client school personnel.

The State Department of Education encourages diversity in the ways that centers are conceptualized. This document attempts to present some "good ideas" so that planners may make optimum choices from maximum choices.

This document may never be completed. As we get experience with center programs, more good ideas will be incorporated, and practices which didn't work will be deleted.



William E. Webster, Director
Office of Staff Development

THE FEDERAL AND STATE PROGRAMS: A COMPARISON

Similarities

1. In both programs, either a single local educational agency or a consortium may apply.

2. Both programs require one or more collaborating institutions of higher education.

3. Both programs require a policy board which must have a majority of teachers.

4. Both programs acknowledge the value of some staff development occurring on released time.

5. Both programs are expected to improve educational service to students.

6. Both programs acknowledge that participation in curriculum development is a legitimate kind of staff development.

7. Both programs require maintenance of local effort: supplement, not supplant.

8. Both programs allow flexibility in how a center is conceptualized.

9. Both programs require state education agency review and approval.

Differences

1. Only the federal program allows institutions of higher education to be the grantee agency. However, there appears to be no legal reason why an IHE could not operate a center under a contract from a grantee agency.

2. Although each program requires a policy board with a majority of teachers and with a variety of other institutional and community members, the state program limits the number of policy board members to 13. The federal program does not.

   In addition, the federal program acknowledges the professional bargaining agent for teachers as having a major role in the selection of teacher members of the policy board. The state program does not.

3. Although the state program stipulates that the full range of education professionals shall have access to training opportunities, the federal program leaves to the center policy board the decision of who, other than teachers, may receive services.

4. The federal program requires that within the area served by a center, nonpublic school teachers must be served. The state program does not. It seems clear that the state program, in the absence of any statutory reference to nonpublic schools, is limited to public schools.

5. Federal regulations are less specific related to governance policies than are the state law and regulations.

6. The federal program allows the applicant local educational agency to apply for funds for one year of planning before implementation. The state program does not.

7. The state and federal programs have different controls on spending. The federal program allows nothing for facility acquisition or remodeling. The state limits capitol expenditures to 10 percent of a project allocation.

8. The state program strongly implies that school sites may purchase staff development services from a center. The federal program is silent on this subject.

9. The state program requires the consolidation of staff development efforts in the participating local education agencies and schools. The federal program does not.

10. The federal program limits the life of a center project to three years. The state program appears to make it possible for a project to receive funding for five years.

11. The federal program provides for a planning grant for one year. The state program does not.

12. For the first year, the state program is limited to six regional centers with funding at up to $80,000. The federal program envisions an average grant of $150,000 for the first year of operation. Also, there is no guarantee that California would receive even one Teacher Center grant.

It is hoped that decisions about which program funds to go for or whether to go for both will be facilitated by this analysis. Readers are reminded, however, that intimate knowledge of the relevant statutes and regulations is the best foundation on which to build such decisions.

ALTERNATIVE WAYS OF VIEWING CENTERS

A great deal is being said and much has already been written about the nature and structure of centers. Whether one thinks about California's School Resource Centers (AB 551/77) or federal Teachers Centers (Higher Education Get Amendments of 1976), it soon becomes clear that there are a wide variety of ways in which centers might be conceptualized, planned, and operated.

A group of people widely representative of California education working as part of the Department's External Task Group, has identified seven relatively different ways of viewing centers. And this without so much as a search of the literature to see how many other variations exist.

Here are some of the variations which were identified:

The Teacher Shelter

This center might be a facility, well-stocked with books, curriculum materials, tools for making things, media library, and a talented and versatile staff. It could incorporate both formal and informal areas, i.e., a lounge and workrooms. Its purposes might be to try to provide immediate responses to requests for assistance from its clients, as well as to provide an alternative environment for teachers to exchange ideas.

The School for Continuing Teacher Education

This center might be located in an abandoned, renovated elementary school. Its inservice program would be planned around workshops or courses in a variety of curricular and interest areas. Its preplanned, scheduled services would be announced and disseminated to schools throughout its service area. Its planned program would be built around aggregated staff development needs data from all of the schools it serves. Pre-enrollment would be discretionary.

The Bouncing Ball

This center might not be a place at all. Its services, preplanned in response to the expressed needs of those in its client system, might be offered in a variety of locations throughout its service area. Pre-enrollment might be required because of scheduling difficulties.

The Leadership Support Center

This center might or might not be in a location where clients would come for training. Its uniqueness lies in its emphasis on training trainers. School district administrators and consultants, building principals, and key teachers might receive training which they, in turn, would replicate for the benefit of those who would not attend.

The Mobile Classroom

This center, literally on wheels, might combine practically everything which characterizes the preceeding models, subject to the limitations of the size and versatility of the vehicles used. It might be moved about in sparsely populated areas on a schedule (days, weeks, or months) so that people in remote locations could have convenient access to the opportunities which it offers.

The Many Headed Hydra

This center might well be an office of staff development in a large urban district. It would coordinate a multifunded, multiprogram network which might operate in many places at the same time. Such a center might have federal teacher center, state school resource center, state professional development and program improvement center, state child services demonstration center, and California Writing Project Center funds. Its tasks of coordination and accountability would be complex.

The Electronic Wizard

This center consists of a computer-based data bank in which district and school site staff development needs assessment data is matched with talent and resources. A sophisticated program might even include a time-available variable for resource persons. It might be essentially a brokerage service with virtually no professional staff, and its services might be targeted to the school site.

These several models are intended to motivate the reader to think creatively about how to bring staff development resources together with the clients. However, there are always the laws and regulations to be contended with. Perhaps a look at the similarities and differences would be beneficial.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES: SOME OPTIONS

Both federal and state laws require that a center project have one or more collaborating institutions of higher education. Although more than one IHE may be associated with the state project, only one representative of IHE's may sit on the policy board.

It can be assumed that state and federal legislators believe that there is a considerable pool of talent among the professors that should be fed into the staff development delivery system. It may also have occurred to some that IHE related practitioners of teacher education might learn from their associations with such projects.

The actual relationship between an IHE and a center project might range from normal participation on the policy board to selling faculty services to contracting for the entire center operation.

An early consideration might be given to identifying the talent resources available from the center IHE faculty. In this regard, community colleges should not be overlooked as sources of expertise.

Merging and dovetailing preservice and inservice education may be possible in some situations. Common personnel, either IHE or LEA based are an easy example. Persons might share staff development, methods courses, and student teaching functions on some contracted basis.

Where IHE's have developed off-campus means for teaching methods courses to undergraduate or fifth year students, local teachers might be enabled to take the courses on a noncredit basis with some exchange of funds.

Cooperative planning and operation of administrative internship programs has worked very well in the past. There may be a coordinating role for centers in such programs.

REGIONAL NETWORKING, INTERFACING AND CONTRACTING

A considerable variety of staff development programs already operate in California. Persons who are searching for resources and for opportunities to provide differentiated responses through a center mechanism to the wide range of assessed needs generated by local school site personnel would do well to be alert to the presence within their service area of the following program projects.

Program	Number of Centers
Professional Development and Program Improvement Centers	13
These projects, limited to serving grades K-8, offer released time inservice education to principals, teachers, and aides to strengthen the teaching of reading and mathematics in schools with high concentrations of lower achieving students.	
Child Services Demonstration Centers	6
These centers train teams of persons from school districts to develop individual educational programs for handicapped students.	
ESEA Title IV-C Critical Needs Projects	13
These projects develop models and processes for originating, implementing, and replicating school and district staff development programs.	
News Careers in Education	6
These projects provide preservice on-the-job training for upper division teacher education students. A team leader provides day-to-day supervision.	
California Writing Project Centers	9
These centers train elementary and secondary teachers to strengthen the composition and creative writing skills of elementary and secondary students.	
Teacher Corps Projects	9
Current two-year projects emphasize intensive staff development in a single school while providing preservice education for a small number of interns. Projects funded for 5 years beginning with 1978-79 will focus on staff development for a feeder system of 2 to 4 schools.	

Networking

Centers of all sorts, once operational, could form regional networks. These networks might be either informal or formal. The purposes would include but not be limited to the exchange of information, sharing expertise, cooperative scheduling of outside resource persons, sharing specific training tasks, and using a common evaluation and research model.

Interfacing

Interfacing might best be described as a combination of separately funded projects operated by the same grantee agency. If a county office of education has allocations for a school resource center, a teacher center, and a professional development and program improvement center project, under state law it would be required to closely coordinate these activities.

While separate accountability requirements might make management complex, there is clearly an opportunity to dovetail the operations for the sake of economy of resources and variations in services offered.

Contracting

Formal contracts for services, especially if they are performance contracts, seem to be compatible with the centers legislation, both state and federal. Some examples which come easily to mind are listed to illustrate what might be possible.

Example 1. A local educational agency with a grant for a Teacher Center or a School Resource Center might contract with a university to operate the program, under the direction, of course, of the policy board.

Example 2. A Teacher Center or School Resource Center funded for one local educational agency might contract for training services with a Professional Development and Program Improvement Center funded for another agency.

Example 3. A center might contract with a county schools office or a regional laboratory for certain training or evaluation services.

These examples are offered, as well as the statements about networking and interfacing, to encourage thinking about thorough exploration, identification, and utilization of appropriate resources.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT: FROM SCHOOL SITE TO REGION

The roles and functions of centers may appear to be split when one thinks about staff development needs assessment processes. This need not be true if one accepts two propositions:

First, only the persons at the local school site can reliably determine their needs for new or extended skills. These will be identified in relation to the program goals established by the school for its students. Thus, the center will aggregate needs data and attempt to provide a valid response to the client schools.

Second, a center may be better able than some local school site staffs to develop and refine staff development needs assessment products and processes. Centers, then, may offer leadership and training to county office, school district, and school site staffs to improve the capacity of school groups to determine their needs for new or extended skills.

The two processes seem to be complimentary and could proceed simultaneously.

GOVERNANCE: COLLABORATION AND PARITY

In the era of collective bargaining and teacher power, some school personnel may be tempted to approach the conceptualization, planning, and implementation of centers as a power struggle. This approach would appear to be counter productive. Both the federal and state programs clearly provide for teachers to hold decision-making power by being in a majority on center policy boards.

The concept of "collaboration" as distinct from "cooperation" may be helpful when persons from different organizational roles and perspectives sit down together to plan. That differing agendas will emerge at such meetings is predictable. There is a need to develop a give and take climate in which rationales for different preferences about center services are shared and weighed. There is a need to continue the belief that most persons in the education professions have the best interests of students at heart.

The concept of parity may not be as useful as the concept of collaboration when center decision making processes are established. There is the simple fact that policy boards are required to have a majority of teachers. In this educational activity, at least, the final decision-making power rests with teachers.

There is a great deal to be said for anticipating possible areas of contention and attempting to deal with them in advance. Although there appears to be the possibility that the governing boards of grantee agencies and the policy boards of centers might experience conflict of objectives, this could be minimized if policies of grantee agencies are clearly enunciated before a center proposal is developed.

Such grantee agency board policies are those that relate to the nature and degree of the agency's commitment to staff development, the curriculum and institutional goals to which the agency is committed, and personnel selection, recruitment, transfer, and retention. When these policies are already adopted and disseminated, the parameters within which the center policy board must approach its work will be clear. Conflict may be reduced.

It may also be anticipated that when a single center services two or more school districts, the policies of the several agencies may be divergent in some respects. There would appear to be a benefit to all parties concerned if interagency agreements clearly designate the policies of the grantee agency as providing the operating framework for the center project.

A statewide group of persons representing various educational roles was gathered to assist the State Department of Education identify potential problems and opportunities inherent in the legislatively prescribed governance of centers. They produced the following lists:

Potential Opportunities

The new governance structure with teachers in a majority of policy board membership can result in:

1. A more open and genuine sharing of experience and resources;

2. A delivery system which is more responsive to its constituents;

3. Heightened perceptions, throughout the client school system of credibility and relevance of staff development experiences;

4. More honest evaluations of both the processes and the products of the staff development delivery system; and

5. A widespread feeling of ownership throughout the client system.

Potential Problems

The new governance structure with teachers in a majority of policy board membership could produce:

1. Adversary relationships and contests for power;

2. Attempts by persons to manipulate decisions (as opposed to real efforts at collaboration);

3. Slowness of decision-making because of the representative nature of seats on the policy board; and

4. Perceptions of low credibility and relevance of staff development experiences by non-teaching constituencies.

DIFFERENTIATING AMONG DELIVERY STRATEGIES

The focus of new California education legislation is the school site. School Site groups are recognized as the appropriate unit to determine needs for improvement of services to students and needs of staff for the acquisition and extension of skills. There is clearly a mandate for centers to deliver job-related, ongoing staff development services tailored to fit the needs of persons and develop the competencies in the local school.

It would be simplistic, however, to assume that all staff development services should literally be delivered to the school site. Cost effective staff development efforts, responsive to the diagnosed needs of individuals, small groups, and whole school staffs may require forming instructional groups in which staff from several schools learn together. "Training", a word used frequently in connection with staff development, carries some important implications. The mere provision of knowledge about something can hardly be seen as training. Yet, providing knowledge in the form of information is the foundation of learning. Training would seem to require some extension of knowledge into concrete experience.

Updating a biology teacher's knowledge of subject matter is within a reasonable scope of staff development activities. This could be approached through auto-instructional materials, small group seminars, or regular university class models. Helping a biology teacher develop more effective techniques in providing a learning situation for students may require a variety of efforts including extended guided practice. This latter is a better example of "training".

Gathering people together at the school site to provide help in learning, planning, or program management skills appears to be a valid example of services delivered right to the school. Bringing a group of teachers from several schools to a central place for staff development in teaching oral language development may be more feasible and cost effective than trying to deal directly with each during the period when new knowledge is being presented. Working supportively directly in the classrooms of teachers who are trying to apply new knowledge in their teaching may be the only way that real "training" can be achieved.

Those who conceptualize how a center program could function may find that such variations in delivering staff development services are appropriate, each for different clients, and each at different times.

TRAINING TRAINERS

The massive job of providing continuing education for the full panoply of persons who contribute to the instruction of students may require, at least for some purposes, that some sort of chain reaction be planned. Persons who conceptualize how centers may serve large constituencies may want to consider how to identify key persons to receive intensive training, and how to create acceptable roles and conditions so that their knowledge and skills may be effectively shared at district and school site levels.

TELLING THE DIFFERENCE: WHAT WORKS AND WHAT DOESN'T?

It is expected that centers will vary considerably in objectives, training strategies, degree of involvement of teachers in the planning and implementation stages, and so on. Along with this diversity of approaches to staff development among the centers, you find that people view indications of program success differently. Some believe that only student test scores are necessary and that they constitute the final work on program success. Other people believe that a valid indicator of success is simply the number of teachers trained and perhaps the intensity of the training sessions. A good evaluation design should incorporate both of these indicators, and then go beyond them to allow for collection of: 1) descriptive data on how centers plan and implement their programs, and 2) measurement of outcomes in addition to student achievement which are anticipated by centers. A comprehensive evaluation design should address questions such as the following:

1. What types of planning activities were conducted?

2. How well did the district organize itself during the planning stage?

3. To what extent was the school staff involved in assessing student needs, identifying available resources, setting objectives, etc.?

4. During the planning stage, to what extent did the district capitalize on resources available from other programs (e.g. Federal Teacher Centers)?

5. How closely did the agency follow its plan during the implementation?

6. Was there an effective means of changing a plan when it became clear that it wasn't working?

7. In what ways did the staff development program change the instructional program at the classroom level? How did it make the instructional program more responsive to individual needs and interests?

8. What organizational and procedural changes were made in the relationship between school and their districts during the planning and implementation stages?

9. What changes were there in the dissemination strategy for successful staff development activities?

10. To what extent were program objectives obtained?

11. What changes were observed in staff skills (e.g. administrative, support, volunteer)?

12. What changes were observed in teaching skills?

13. Were newly acquired skills used?

14. Is there a relationship between the extent of training received and observable changes in teaching behavior?

15. What changes were there in student outcomes? school climate? counseling and guidance procedures?

16. Were any of these changes in number 15 observed for teachers who had either a high degree of involvement in staff development or a very low amount of involvement?

SOME SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

Those who are interested in developing approvable center applications and effective staff development delivery systems may wish to explore some of the resources listed below. This incomplete listing is suggestive of the broad range of aides which might be considered in conceptualizing what might be possible.

PUBLICATIONS OF THE CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, OFFICE OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT

OCCASIONAL PAPER SERIES

Occasional Paper Number One
"Collaborating in Inservice Education"
(Myrna Cooper)

Occasional Paper Number Two
"Inservice Teacher Education in California: Views of Teachers"
(Bruce Joyce)

Occasional Paper Number Three
"The New Teacher Center Program"
(Charles Lovett and Allen Schmieder)

Occasional Paper Number Four
"A Framework for Staff Development Needs Assessment"
(Carl M. Schmitthausler)

List: National Network for Bilingual Education (Available: Originally published by the U.S. Office of Education)

PUBLICATIONS OF THE
CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION,
OFFICE OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT

STAFF DEVELOPMENT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SERIES

1. Instructions: How to Apply for Local Staff Development Program Funds
   (Available)

2. Advisory: Making Local Staff Development Programs Work
   (Available in draft form, 3/1/78)

3. Instructions: How to Apply for School Resource Center Funds
   (Available)

4. Instructions: How to Apply for Federal Teacher Center Funds
   (Available)

5. Advisory: Making Centers Work
   (Available in draft form, 3/1/78)

6. Instructions: How to Apply for PDPIC Funds
   (Available)

7. Advisory: Professional Development and Program Improvement
   (Available)

8. Instructions: How to Apply for New Careers in Education Funds
   (Available)

9. Advisory: New Careers in Education Projects
   (Available)

10. Advisory: A Framework for Developing Teaching Competencies
    (Available in draft form, 2/1/78)

11. Advisory: A Multiple Input Staff Development Needs Assessment Procedure
    (Available in draft form, 2/1/78)

12. Advisory: An Inventory of Staff Development Programs Administered by the State Department of Education
    (Available in draft form, 2/1/78)

13. Advisory: Evaluating Staff Development Programs: Process and Product
    (Scheduled for summer, 1978)

14. Advisory: Local School Board Policy and Staff Development
    (Scheduled for summer, 1978)

15. "A Partial Directory of Currently Funded Staff Development Projects in California"
    (Available)

16. State Approval Criteria: 13th Cycle Teacher Corps Projects

OTHER STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION RESOURCES

California State Department
of Education
Office of Information
National Diffusion Network
721 Capitol Mall
Sacramento, CA 95814
916-322-6140

The Education Information Resources
Service
Frank Wallace, Director
Office of Information
721 Capitol Mall
Sacramento, CA 95814
916-322-6140

Migrant Education Program
Staff Development
William Kenney, Coordinator
Office of Compensatory Education
721 Capitol Mall
Sacramento, CA 95814
916-322-4830

Bilingual Education Core Unit
Dr. Guillermo Lopez, Director
721 Capitol Mall
Sacramento, CA 95814
916-445-2872

Office of Special Education
Staff Development
Dr. Karl E. Murray, Coordinator
721 Capitol Mall
Sacramento, CA 95814
916-322-4695

California Right-to-Read Program
Dr. Fred A. Tillman, Director
721 Capitol Mall
Sacramento, CA 95814
916-445-9317

California Coalition for Sex
Equity in Education
Dr. Barbara Landers, Director
721 Capitol Mall
Sacramento, CA 95814
916-322-2737

Exemplary Programs Service
Dr. Dorothy Blackmore, Manager
721 Capitol Mall
Sacramento, CA 95814
916-322-6140

Pupil Personnel Services
Dr. Annel Upton, Administrator
721 Capitol Mall
Sacramento, CA 95814
916-322-6352

School Health Program
Ms. Em Riggs, Administrator
721 Capitol Mall
Sacramento, CA 95814
916-322-5240

One free copy of the above may be obtained by telephoning or writing to:

State Department of Education
Office of Staff Development
721 Capitol Mall
Sacramento, CA 95814
916-322-5537

EXAMPLES OF EXTERNAL RESOURCES

Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development
John Hemphill
1855 Folsom Street
San Francisco, CA 94103
415-565-3000

NASA Aerospace Education Services Project
Center Education Program Office
NASA Annex Research Center
Moffet Field, CA 94035
415-965-5544

"Elements of Effective Teaching": A Media Training Package
Dr. Ronald Hockwalt
Division of Instruction
San Diego County Department of Education
714-292-3568

Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
James Perry, Executive Director
211 E. 7th Street
Austin, TX 78701
512-476-6861

Equal Opportunity in the Classroom
Sam Kermin, Director
Los Angeles County Education Center
9300 East Imperial Hwy., Room 246
Downey, CA 90242
213-922-6168

SWIRL Educational Research and Development
Richard E. Schutz, Director
4665 Lampson Avenue
Los Alamitos, CA 90720
213-598-7661

Center for Study of Evaluation
Eva Baker, Director
Graduate School of Education
University of California at Los Angeles
145 Moore Hall
Los Angeles, CA 90024
213-825-4711

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